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COMMUNICATION OF 22 MAY 1998 RECEIVED FROM THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

Attached is a communication received from the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation, forwarding a statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia and a communication for publication, for the information of Member States.

For reasons of economy, this document has been printed in a limited number.

98-01859

TEXT OF COMMUNICATION OF 22 MAY 1998 FROM THE RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

Dear Mr. Waller,

We are sending you a statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia and a communication for publication regarding the tests of nuclear explosive devices conducted by India.

I should be grateful if they could be circulated amongst the IAEA Member States.

Attachment: as indicated, 2 pages.

(signed) p.p. A. Yakovenko
Resident Representative

Mr. D. Waller
Deputy Director General
Department of Administration
IAEA, Vienna

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

The news of the testing of three nuclear explosive devices by India on 11 May 1998 was greeted in Russia with alarm and concern.

This step runs counter to the efforts of the world community towards global and regional strengthening of the regime of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, which is a vital factor in international stability and security.

At a time when a universal moratorium on nuclear tests is being observed such actions are inadmissible. We, as a close friend of India, view this action with the deepest regret.

Such actions by the Indian authorities are pushing the world towards the spreading of nuclear weapons and place considerable additional difficulties in the path of future nuclear arms reduction. We hope that this policy of India's will not lead to a chain reaction in the South Asia region and beyond.

We appeal to India to review its present nuclear policy and to accede to both the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, on which mankind is pinning its hopes for a non-nuclear world in the 21st century. Russia will continue to do all within its power to strengthen the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to prevent it being undermined or eroded.

Communication for publication

On 14 May 1998 the President of the United Nations Security Council delivered a statement, agreed upon in the Security Council, concerning the nuclear tests conducted by India. This statement strongly deplored the nuclear tests carried out by India on 11 and 13 May 1998.

Russia, as a permanent member of the Security Council, took an active part in the preparation of that statement.

We had already prepared a statement declaring that the news about the series of nuclear tests conducted by India had been received in Russia with alarm and concern. Russia called on India to review its present nuclear policy and to accede unconditionally to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

We consider, however, that the placing of any economic sanctions on India would be unjustified both under international law and from the humanitarian point of view; moreover, it would be a counter-productive step.

We are convinced that the strong political signal sent by the world community in connection with the nuclear tests conducted by India will be correctly appraised in that friendly country.

We also express the hope that the Indian nuclear tests will not lead to a chain reaction in the South Asia region and beyond.